

Library

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Figure 1



Figure 1

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Figure 1

1998-1999

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1953.

Owing to an alteration in the allocation of deaths occurring in long stay institutions, the Borough statistics have now to take into account all the deaths occurring in the St. Lawrence's Hospital. The effect is virtually to treble the death rate of the town, and is obviously of no value to the Borough, nor does it give any true indication of the trends within the town. I have therefore given two rates, one including the St. Lawrence deaths and the other excluding them. In classifying deaths I have only referred to those directly connected with the town.

The Council has faced two major problems for some years now. On the housing side good building progress allowed a small effort to be made on slum clearance by treating individual unfit houses. Although this method is not a good way to tackle slum property it did make a beginning to what was hoped would be a far more comprehensive programme in the near future. It appears however that the finances of the town are not considered sufficient to warrant an all out effort to rehouse the many families living in sub-standard property. The Council's present housing demand is for more than 150 houses; the 1954 housing programme is for 8 houses and 7 bungalows.

To say that the Council has faced the water situation with enthusiasm would be an overstatement. It has in fact been looked at with a bit of a squint, the good eye being focussed on the price, the poor eye on the need for improvement, and the slow rate of progress suggests that the need for improvement is not regarded as particularly urgent. The means to achieve a satisfactory water supply have been indicated by numerous experts. In the Ministry of Health Survey of 1944 it was suggested that "Considerable works were required, including relaying pipe from source and full treatment works. These may be beyond the financial capacity of the Company. If so it may be necessary for a Public Authority to take over in order to find the necessary money and to bring the works up to date," and further that participation in the De Lank water scheme could lead to the abandonment of the present source of supply. After ten years of spasmodic consideration we are virtually no nearer a solution, in spite of the fact that the De Lank scheme has been completed so far as a source to the Borough is concerned. Much valuable time has been lost and it is unlikely that the price will be made less by further delay.

A good supply could be secured in a short time, and at a cost in keeping with what is usually considered reasonable. I sincerely hope that this will be the last Annual Report in which I have to state that the water supply of the County Town of Cornwall should be boiled before drinking.

I should like to express my thanks to the Council and its officials for their continued assistance and beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN REED.

1. STATISTICS.

General Statistics.

Area in Acres	3,311.
Estimated mid-year population	6,508.
Number of Inhabited Houses.	1,564.
Rateable Value	£34,110.
Sum represented by penny rate.	£134.
Comparability Factors.	
(a) Births	1.56.
(b) Deaths	0.89.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births

Table 1.

Registered Live Births, 1953.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	52	33	85
Illegitimate	1	2	3
	<hr/> 53	<hr/> 35	<hr/> 88

Birth Rate per 1,000 population 13.5

Birth Rate per 1,000 population England & Wales 15.5

Stillbirths

One male stillbirth was registered during the year.

Infant Deaths.

Two infant male deaths were registered, one of which occurred in the first month of life.

Deaths.

Table 11.

Number of Registered Deaths, 1954.

Male.	Female.	Total
95	111	206

Crude death Rate per 1,000 population	31.6
Death Rate England & Wales.	11.4

Table 111

Number of Registered Deaths, excluding St. Lawrence's Hospital.

	Male	Female	Total
	34	30	64

Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population 9.8

Table 1V.

Distribution of Deaths by Diseases, excluding St. Lawrence's Hospital

	Male	Female	Total
Heart Diseases	17	8	25
Cerebro Vascular Disease	3	7	10
Other Circulatory Diseases -		4	4
Cancer	1	4	5
Respiratory Diseases (excluding tuberculosis)	3	2	5
Accident	1	2	3
All other Causes	9	3	12
	<hr/> 34	<hr/> 30	<hr/> 64

Table V.

Distribution of Deaths by Ages.

	Male	Female	Total
0 - 1 month	1	-	1
1 month - 1 year	1	-	1
1 - 20	1	1	2
21-40	1	1	2
41-60	7	9	16
61-70	6	3	9
71-80	11	10	21
81-90	6	6	12
90 +	-	-	-
	<hr/> 34	<hr/> 30	<hr/> 64

11. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Hospital and Maternity Accommodation.

There were no changes in the hospital services to the district during 1953. Maternity cases continued to travel long distances to hospital or nursing homes and these journeys must frequently have caused great anxiety to those involved. Thirty three of the 88 total births took place in hospital accommodation. The greater proportion of these were normal cases which might well have been conducted within the district had suitable accommodation been available. A growing need exists for maternity accommodation in the area.

Excellent co-operation was established with the Chest Physician at the East Cornwall Hospital in the supervision of contacts of tuberculous persons, and the work proceeded without major difficulties. The main cause for anxiety lies in the inadequacy of the out-patients department of the hospital. Those who are familiar with it appreciate the discomfort and inconvenience of waiting in the small corridor which cannot accommodate the numbers of patients requiring to be seen on busy days.

The hospital urgently requires expansion to cope with the large numbers of people now attending its out-patient and physio-therapy departments, and also to provide staff accommodation.

Laboratory Services.

Bacteriological analysis of water and food samples was carried out by the Public Health Laboratory Services at Truro.

County Council Services.

Ambulance Service.

The County Council Main Ambulance Station employing a total of 7 male and 1 female drivers to man 2 ambulances and 2 utility vans gave adequate cover during the year.

Maternal and Child Welfare.

The Infant Welfare Centre in Bodmin continued to be held twice monthly. The average attendance was 22 children.

Prevention of Illness, Care and After-Care.

All notified cases of tuberculosis were visited regularly. All

houshold contacts were X.Rayed and tuberculin tested where required. Six new contacts were vaccinated with B.C.G. No County Council grants were made to tuberculous patients.

Vaccination and Immunisation.

A combined vaccine for diphtheria and whooping cough was almost exclusively used during the year but no great increase in the immunisation rate was observed. Of 74 children born in 1952 only 40 had received any form of immunisation by the end of 1953. Sixty nine children of all age groups received a primary course of diphtheria immunisation and 71 received boosting doses. Twenty eight persons received primary inoculation against small-pox and 10 were re-vaccinated.

Home Help Service.

Forty one families received assistance on medical grounds from this service which employed 5 spare time helps.

111. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Water Supplies.

The situation regarding the town's water supply did not alter during the year. Reports were obtained from engineers engaged by the Council and various discussions took place with them and also with the Ministry of Housing & Local Government officials. No decisive steps were taken which would secure improvement of the unsatisfactory state of affairs. Routine samples produced similar results to those of previous years and I must therefore continue to issue the warning that for safety, water should be boiled before drinking. Deficiencies in quantity were reported from Beacon Hill as a result of defective mains.

TABLE V.

Water Supplies 1953.

Date	Number of Coliform Bacilli per 100 ml	Number of Faecal Coli per 100 ml.
20.1.53.	11	1
3.2.53.	5	1
11.2.53.	1	0
17.2.53.	0	0

24.2.53.	1.	0.
17.3.53.	0.	0.
10.4.53.	50.	3.
23.4.53.	13.	1.
19.5.53.	0.	0.
4.6.53.	4.	0.
16.6.53.	7.	1.
24.6.53.	3.	0.
13.7.53.	11.	8.
24.8.53.	180+	13.
25.7.53.	5.	1.
5.9.53.	50.	-.
23.9.53.	1.	0.
17.10.53.	0.	0.
21.10.53.	17.	1.
30.10.53.	90.	3.
17.11.53.	17.	0.
27.11.53.	160.	0.
8.12.53.	13.	0.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

No major extensions to the sewers were made during the year. The treatment works functioned satisfactorily with the exception of a short period of Dragon Pits when unsatisfactory effluents were recorded. The structural state of the Scarletts Well works is such that renewal of considerable portions may be required in the near future. Housing development on the Weatheath Estate will require the installation of a sewer at an early date. The large number of separate treatment tanks in a relatively small area can no longer be regarded as a satisfactory means of disposal.

Refuse Disposal.

The Borough refuse continued to be deposited at the dump at Dragon Pits and gave rise to no nuisance.

Rodent Control.

The Council continued to supervise rodent infestation within the Borough. Minor infestations only were occasionally reported and dealt with.

Sanitary Inspections.

Summary of Visits.

Housing Inspections	179
Slaughterhouse Visits	21
Other Premises	109

Statutory notices were served in 3 cases in respect of housing defects.

IV. HOUSING.

Forty six houses were completed by the Council and 13 by Private Enterprise. The Council's contribution included 6 bungalows for old people. Four houses were submitted to the Council for treatment under Section 11, Housing Act 1936. Permission was granted to prepare clearance schemes in Downing Square and Downing Street but owing to the reduced building activities of the Council and the likelihood of new legislation on the subject the proposals were not pursued.

V. Food AND DRUGS.

Ice Cream.

Three new premises were registered for the sale of pre-packed ice-cream. No samples of ice-cream were submitted for bacteriological testing.

Milk and Dairies.

Distributors premises on the Council's register were not visited during the year. The greater proportion of retailed milk was received by distributors already bottled, some was bottled on the premises and a little unbottled raw milk was still sold in the town.

Slaughter of Animals.

The slaughterhouse was used only when the Ministry of Food's slaughterhouse in Wadebridge was out of action. It was used on 5 occasions only, during the year.

Food Samples.

The County Council's Inspectors submitted 29 milk and 21 other samples for analysis. Two milk samples were found to be unsatisfactory.

VI. FACTORIES.

The 39 premises on the Council's register were visited. Sanitary defects were reported in one and remedy secured.

VII. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notified Infectious Diseases, 1953.

Whooping Cough	13
Measles	10
Dysentery	3
Scarlet Fever	3
Pneumonia	3
Total	<u>32</u>

Whooping Cough continued to be the most frequently notified infectious disease. Measles was reported in the early part of the year. Dysentery was occasionally notified from St. Lawrence's Hospital.

Tuberculosis

TABLE VI

Notified Tuberculosis 1953.

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary		Total
	Male.	Female	Male	Female	
Notified Cases at 31.12.52.	18	17	4	6	45
New Cases					
Notified 1953	1	4	-	1	6
Transfers to Borough	1	-	-	-	1
Total Entries	20	21	4	7	52
Deaths	1	1	-	-	2

Removals and					
Discharges.	2	-	-	-	2
Total Removed	3	1	-	-	4
Total Remaining					
at 31.12.53.	17	20	4	7	48

Five new notifications were received, 4 of pulmonary and 1 of non-pulmonary tuberculosis. Two cases occurred in the St. Lawrence's Hospital. Household contacts continued to be supervised and six tuberculin negative contacts received B.C.G. vaccination.

